



U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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News Advisory

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Contact: Jeff Lungren/Terry Shawn
202-225-2492

Oversight Hearing Thursday on Local Law Efforts to Confront Violence Along the Southern Border

What: Oversight Hearing entitled, “Outgunned and Outmanned: Local Law Enforcement Confronts Violence Along the Southern Border”
Who: Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Claims - Rep. John N. Hostettler (R-IN), Chairman AND the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security - Rep. Howard Coble (R-N.C.), Chairman
When: 12:00 p.m., Thursday, March 2, 2006
Where: 2237 Rayburn Building

Local law enforcement has faced approximately 200 military incursions along the Southwest border since 1999. While many of these incursions have been accidental, some appear to have been in support of narcotics and human smuggling activities. In the latest incident on January 23, 2006, a criminal gang dressed in military uniforms and carrying automatic weapons confronted a lightly armed, small group of deputy sheriffs and Texas troopers on the banks of the Rio Grande River in West Texas.

BACKGROUND

The Mexican government has army units stationed near the border with the United States. These military units are in the same locations where narcotics and human smuggling attempts are planned and executed.

Narcotic and human smuggling gangs are often accompanied by armed escorts dressed in military uniforms who demonstrate knowledge of field combat techniques.

Narcotic and human smuggling attempts are an increasing threat to the safety of the United States Border Patrol and local law enforcement officials.

Despite good intentions, the Mexican government is unable to protect its own officials from assassinations and intimidations by smuggling gangs.

THIS JOINT HEARING WILL EXAMINE...

- ✓ What type of relationship, if any, exists between Mexican military units and criminals who engage in narcotics and human smuggling.
- ✓ What additional efforts are needed to help reduce the incidence of narcotics and human smuggling along the Southwest border, and the violence and murder that accompany it.

WITNESSES: Sheriff Leo Samaniego, El Paso County Sheriff's Office; Sheriff Larry Dever, Cochise County Sheriff's Office; Sheriff Todd Garrison, Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office; and Sheriff Sigifredo Gonzalez, Jr., Zapata County Sheriff's Office.

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